

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BELGRADE 5452

DEPT PLEASE PASS TO JOHN DUNLOP, SECRETARY OF LABOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG ILO UN

SUBJECT: US MEMBERSHIP IN ILO

1. I UNDERSTAND THROUGH NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS THAT THERE PRESENTLY IS A DEBATE WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATION CONCERNING THE WISOM OF USG FORMALLY WITHDRAWING FROM THE ILO. FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF ONE WHO SPENT FOUR YEARS DEALING WITH ILO MATTERS IN THE LABOR DEPARTMENT, I SHOULD LIKE TO ADD SUPPORT TO WITHDRAWAL.

2. FOR SOME TIME THE ILO HAS BEEN A PERVERSION OF ITS INITIAL PRINCIPLES FOR WELL-KNOWN REASONS; ADMISSION OF TOTALITARIAN STATES WITHOUT FREE TRADE UNIONS OR FREE EMPLOYERS. IT HAS BEEN MY VIEW SINCE 1969 THAT NEITHER USG NOR AMERICAN LABOR UNIONS NOR AMERICAN EMPLOYERS GAIN ANYTHING FROM MEMBERSHIP. THE ORIGINAL WILSONIAN IDEA OF HARMONIZING LABOR STANDARDS HAS LONG SINCE BEEN ABANDONED BY THE ORGANIZATION.

3. MORE IMPORTANTLY, I BELIEVE WE ACHIEVE A FOREIGN POLICY GAIN BY WITHDRAWING COMPLETELY AND IRREVOCABLY FROM THE ILO. ANYONE WHO CONSIDERS THE ISSUE SHOULD FOCUS ON ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE UN AND APPARENTLY
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IT IS ON THOSE IMPLICATIONS THAT THE OPPONENTS OF

WITHDRAWAL REST THEIR CASE. MY OWN VIEW HAS BEEN THAT
WITHDRAWAL WOULD SIGNIFICANTLY SERVE USG POLICY
VIS-A-VIS THE UN.

4. TO A GREAT EXTENT OUR LEVERAGE AND INFLUENCE IN
THE UN IS DIRECTLY CONNECTED TO THE APPREHENSIONS OF
MANY OF THE THIRD WORLD-NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES THAT
IN THE EVENT THEY PRESSED TOO FAR AGAINST FUNDAMENTAL
USG INTERESTS AT THE UN FORUM, WE WOULD WITHDRAW.
THE ILO WITHDRAWAL ADDS CREDIBILITY TO THAT POTENTIAL
COURSE OF ACTION AS NO OTHER ACT OR THREAT WOULD.

5. THE NON-ALIGNED NATIONS SHOULD BELIEVE THAT THE
USG KEEPS AN ANNUAL BALANCE SHEET AS TO THE PROS
AND CONS OF UN MEMBERSHIP AND ALTHOUGH WE BELIEVE
FIRMLY UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES THAT OUR CONTINUED
MEMBERSHIP SERVES USG AND WORLD INTERESTS, WE DO NOT
SHRINK FROM THE POSSIBILITY THAT THAT MAY SOME DAY
NOT BE TRUE. A COOL AND DELIBERATE WITHDRAWAL FROM
THE ILO BASED ON JUST SUCH AN ANALYSIS MAKES THE POINT.

6. WHEN I CAME TO BELGRADE THE ISSUE OF ISRAELI
EXPLUSION FROM THE UN WAS LIVE. I EMPHASIZED IN
UNEQUIVOCAL TERMS--SPEAKING MORE AS A POLITICIAN
THAN A DIPLOMAT--THAT SUSPENSION OR EXPLUSION OF
ISRAEL WOULD RESULT IN IMMEDIATE CONGRESSIONAL ACTION
WHICH WOULD IRREVOCABLY WEAKEN ATTACHMENT TO THE
UN. AND IN SUPPORT OF THIS POLITICAL PREDICTION I ASKED
GOY REPRESENTATIVES TO WATCH THE EVENTS IN GENEVA
CAREFULLY AND HOW CONGRESS WOULD RESPOND. I DO NOT
HAVE ANY DOUBT THAT THEY GOT THE MESSAGE AND I
THEREFORE BELIEVE THAT IT HAD SOME IMPACT ON GOY
POLICY ON THE ISSUE.

7. IN SHORT A FORMAL IRREVOCABLE DECISION TO WITHDRAW,
IN MY VIEW,COSTS LITTLE AND GAINS A GREAT DEAL.
SILBERMAN

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